



ACQUISITION  
AND SUSTAINMENT

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

September 19, 2022

The Honorable Matt Gaetz  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1721 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gaetz:

I am responding to your July 21, 2022, letter to Secretary Austin regarding the potential for wind development that may be incompatible with military operations in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico (EGOMEX). In the 2018 "Preserving Military Readiness in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico" report, the Department of Defense (DoD) concluded that EGOMEX is an irreplaceable national asset for developing and maintaining the readiness of our combat forces and is critical to achieving the objectives in the National Defense Strategy.

Through the Military Aviation and Installation Assurance Siting Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse), the DoD provides early and consistent notifications to the Department of Interior of DoD's training and readiness concerns in particular areas, including EGOMEX. Throughout its history, the Clearinghouse has been successful in protecting training and readiness from various forms of incompatible development. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has established regional task forces to incorporate concerns of all stakeholders in offshore wind energy siting plans. The Clearinghouse is an active participant in this process to ensure that military testing, training and operations are protected from incompatible energy development. While there are task force efforts underway for the Central and Western GOMEX, there are no current plans to develop wind energy projects in the EGOMEX, and thus there is no task force or other planning effort for wind development in EGOMEX.

I appreciate your efforts to protect the military mission in the EGOMEX from incompatible development. My point of contact is Mr. Steve Sample, at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

William A. LaPlante